

[00038] Having thus set forth the nature of the invention, what is claimed herein is:

1. A surgical retractor comprising:
 - a laterally extending rack having a proximal and distal portion;
 - a first arm connected to the rack at a first location and extending longitudinally from the first location to an end;
 - a moveable second arm having a housing for slidably engaging a portion of the rack, said second arm extending longitudinally from the housing to an end; said housing having an adjustment mechanism for allowing the positioning of the housing relative to the rack at a desired location and at least temporary fixating the housing at the desired location; and
 - a retractor clamp having a slot therein, said clamp slidably engaged on one of the first and second arms; said clamp having a leg extending therefrom with a mount for receiving a connector head of a retractor blade.
2. The surgical retractor of claim 1 wherein the clamp further comprises a member containing the slot therein and a latch, said latch connected to the member for selectively retaining the clamp at a selected position relative to the one of the first and second arms.
3. The surgical retractor of claim 1 wherein at least one of the first and second arms has a plurality of teeth in a toothed back surface and the latch is retained intermediate two of the plurality of teeth.

4. The surgical retractor of claim 1 wherein the slot is at least substantially parallel to the mount.
5. The surgical retractor of claim 1 wherein clamp further comprises a member containing the slot therein, and the leg is angularly positionable relative to the member.
6. The surgical retractor of claim 5 wherein the clamp further comprises an adjustment mechanism coupled to the leg, and operation of the adjustment mechanism moves the leg relative to the member.
7. The surgical retractor of claim 5 wherein the adjustment mechanism further comprises a threaded shaft which is threadably received relative to at least one of the member and leg, and rotation of the threaded shaft allows for incremental movement of the leg relative to the member.
8. The surgical retractor of claim 7 further comprising a release member on one of the member and leg and operation of the release member disengages the threaded shaft from the one of the member and the leg.
9. The surgical retractor of claim 7 wherein the leg has at least one projection in which the threaded shaft passes through.

10. The surgical retractor of claim 9 further comprising a pivot connecting the member and the leg, and wherein the threaded shaft has a nut thereon which moves along an axis of the shaft upon rotation of the shaft and axial movement of the nut against the at least one projection rotates the leg relative to the pivot.

11. The surgical retractor of claim wherein the clamp further comprises a member housing the slot intermediate upper and lower surfaces, and a latch is coupled to one of the upper and lower surfaces biased into a plane of the slot to selectively retain the clamp relative to the one of the first and second arms.

12. The surgical retractor of claim 1 further comprising a release coupled to the latch wherein operation of the release overcomes biasing forces acting on the latch allowing the latch to be moved out of the plane of the latch so that the clamp may be moved relative to the one of the first and second arms.

13. The surgical retractor of claim 1 wherein the clamp further comprises a member housing the slot therein; said surgical retractor in combination with a hand held gripper having a handle connected by a shaft to a shoe, said shoe having a slot for receiving a connector head of a retractor blade therein; said connector head passing through the mount in the leg and being at least partially retained in the mount by the shoe.

14. The surgical retractor of claim 13 wherein shaft is rotatable relative to the shoe, and further comprising a post, wherein rotation of the shaft in a first direction extends the post into the shoe for securing the head to the shoe with the clamp connected to the connector head.

15. The surgical retractor of claim 14 wherein the rotation of the shaft in the first direction extends the post into the slot until it contacts the connector head.

16. The surgical retractor of claim 13 wherein the shaft is angularly connected relative to the shoe and the member has a groove in which the shaft passes through when the shoe is connected to a connector head extending through the mount in the leg.